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THE ACADEMY FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
THE WATER EFFICIENCY AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT
FOR ACTION (WEPIA)
QUALITATIVE RESEARCH TO PRE-TEST NEW NAME
FOR WATER SAVING DEVICES, BROCHURE, AND
FLIPCHART

REPORT

April, 2001

Introduction

WEPIA has exerted a great deal of energy on preparing the Jordanian public to accept the use of Water Saving Devices (WSDs). WSDs in the mind of the public means restrictors as much as it does aerators, and the experience of the people with restrictors has been a painful one. Many, upon the recommendation of the ministry, have purchased the restrictors, but removed them after a while due to non-performance.

Research was carried to suggest a new name for the aerators or the water saving devices. Focus group discussions were conducted in Amman among men and women of the A, B and C1 social classes.

WEPIA also intends to distribute a brochure explaining in details the functions and advantages of the aerators for faucets and showers and the 6 liter toilet tanks. Research was also required to test this brochure among the male and female groups.

WEPIA is also conducting another activity with the Professional and Businesswomen Association, whereby women would be trained to conduct meetings with potential buyers of WSDs. During these meetings the sellers would use a flip chart to explain about water issues and WSDs. The flip chart has four main sections:

- The water situation in Jordan
- Water audit
- WSDs
- Behaviour.

Research was also required to pretest the flip chart among the female groups.

Seven group discussions, 3 among men and 4 among women were conducted in Amman. All groups pretested the new name and the brochures. The flip chart was only pretested among the female groups.

Main Findings

Overall

Although many feel that we have a water shortage problem in Jordan, and it is the government's responsibility to rectify the situation, they still feel that they can do something about the problem if not for the general good, but for their own benefits.

Many do not feel that they can save more than they are already doing. But, reducing water bills and having the same water last longer for their personal use are concepts that are positively received.

Reinforce the concept of saving money as well as saving water so that the same amount will last longer.

New Name for WSD's

Spontaneous reactions

The groups were asked if they had any recollection of TV advertisements or print material that advocate water saving and means of conserving water. Many remembered the spots that were aired on Jordan television. The main message that was spontaneously recollected was the one that tells people to use buckets instead of hoses when cleaning their cars or watering their gardens. Another message was not allowing the water to flow while doing the cleaning chores.

Some mentioned seeing an advertisement about devices that are installed on faucets, showers and toilet tanks. These devices, called water saving devices, mix air with water, but the amount of water coming out of the faucets is reduced. The real effect of the devices was not clear to many. This probably was the cause that they were not motivated to buy such devices and it was not clear where are these devices available.

Few had seen advertisements on Syrian television about "devices installed on faucets and showers and the 6-liter toilet tanks". When asked about their reactions to such messages, the responses were favourable, they may have considered installing them but the impression was that these devices were not available in Jordan. However, none referred to them as aerators or water saving devices.

Among those who have heard of the devices that are installed on faucets, the most common name that they used when referring to them was filters. Filters, in the mind of the respondents, were devices installed on faucets that are plastic and serve the purpose of filtering the dirt, but they also reduce the amount of water coming out of faucets.

“The water is like a thread.”

Here again, none mentioned aerators or water saving devices.

Prompted reactions

The groups were then shown the aerators and their function was explained. Some already had them but were not aware of that fact. Unfortunately, not all could feel its effects as the water pressure in some venues was not sufficient for testing such devices, and the RST machine could not be brought to the venues.

Aerators to many meant something that brings in air from outside, and usually it is outside the house.

When asked to suggest names, “water saver” was widely mentioned. There was an almost unanimous agreement on this name in all the groups.

On the other hand, water saving devices conveyed the message of conserving water, but the word device suggested large equipment. The consensus was the use of “water saving pieces.”

Almost all preferred Arabic names. Although some said that using a simple English name would serve the purpose if the concept is advertised and heavily promoted.

Almost all expected to see such devices in outlets selling construction material and sanitary equipment.

Some said that they would buy such devices, at least they would try them and test their effect.

The Brochure

Overall reaction

Copies of the brochure were distributed to the group participants, and they were given some time to read them.

Overall, the reaction was positive. They felt that people would be interested in reducing their water bills, and the immediate reaction upon seeing these brochures would be to read them. Although few said that they would not even bother to read it, or would dispose of it as soon as they read the contents.

Recollection of the messages was somewhat high but a bit vague.

“It is about devices that are installed on showers and faucets.”

“Aerators on faucets that reduce water consumption.”

“How to save on water bills.”

“If water pressure is high we should install aerators.”

“Aerators reduce water flow.”

“When we open the faucets partially we also reduce 30%.”

Some had accurate recollection of some messages:

“The valve on the shower keeps the water temperature constant, you don’t have to keep opening and shutting the faucets.”

“Install the devices internally or externally according to the type of faucet that you have.”

When asked what would you do after reading such a brochure, the responses were various and too general:

“I would fix whatever is broken.”

“Conduct maintenance.”

“Check the quality of the faucets.”

“Try the devices.”

Specific Reactions to Each Section

The cover

The question on the cover “do you wish to reduce your water bill?” was received favourably, and thought to be a good way of attracting people’s attention.

However, some thought that the illustration of the “reduced water bill” could mean that the water bill is reduced, like a “special offer from WAJ”, specially if the brochure is to be distributed with the bills.

The introduction

“Dear homeowner” could be misleading. It could be interpreted to be addressed specifically to owners of houses. Some suggested replacing it with “Dear citizen.”

Overall, the messages were clear. “It is suggesting means of keeping your water for a longer time so you would not be forced to buy water from tankers.”

“We can be spared from buying water from tankers.”

“If you purchase the devices, your water bill will be reduced by 30%.”

Where do we start

1. Faucets

Overall, the recollection of the main messages was relatively high, but not very accurate.

“It is about maintenance, where installed and cost. “

“The amount of water will be reduced.”

“Maintenance every 4 years.”

“ The cost is reasonable.”

“There are internal and external threads.”

“Cleaning in vinegar.”

“The devices reduce the cost by 50%.”

In this regard, some saw a discrepancy between the 50% mentioned here, and the 30% in the first section.

The sentence “if the faucets are 4 years old or longer”, then they will waste water. 4 years period was confusing and at the same time raised questions as to why 4 not 5 or more years.

The section on the water flow was also confusing, it contained some technical terms that were not clearly understood. “Water flow of 6 liters”, “domed aerators” “different types of threads.”

The illustration of the aerator was not clear. The rings were perceived as the rubber pieces on the faucets.

“It is a small piece or rubber to be installed on or over the faucets.”

The writing next to the illustration was also not clear, by mentioning, “internal washer and external washer” reinforced the concept of filters.

“These are the same as the filters that we had already talked about.”

2. Showerheads

Overall, this section contained many messages that were not clear. The reference to the 4 years was also criticized here. The flow of 9-liter per minute was confusing to many. It was not clear that the most appropriate showerheads give a flow of 9 liters.

“If the water flow is 9 liters, it is not mentioned by how much it will be reduced after installing the devices.”

The functions of the valves and the aerators were confused, it was not clear when to install each one and why

Also, the term “valve” was not understood.

The illustration did not clearly convey the message.

3. Toilet tanks

Overall, the messages were not clear, the replacement of the inner tank and the dual flush system was confusing to almost all participants. The same applies to the third section where it is recommended to use the “water sentry refill valve”, the use of technical terms was confusing and incomprehensible.

The section dealing with inserting bottles inside the toilet tanks was well understood. This message was remembered by many from the TV ads that were aired on Jordan television some time ago.

4. Names and telephone numbers of suppliers

Although many thought that it would be a good idea to have the names of suppliers easily available, but adding addresses to the list would make it easier to determine which supplier to contact.

However, including names of those suppliers gave the impression to some that this is a commercial venture for material gain.

The colours and the text

The colours were well liked. The use of blue was found to be appropriate and suitable for the subject.

The font size was also found appropriate and clear.

The Flipchart

The cover

The woman was well liked, in many instances she was perceived to be a Jordanian woman. A good housewife that is trying to manage her household finances efficiently.

The idea of using the same woman inside the flipchart to present the information as a story was not found to be interesting or useful.

Sections two and three, water audit and WSD's, being the heart of the chart, were gone through in more detail than the other two sections.

Overall comments

The dimensions were appropriate, it was easily visible to the groups. The print and the illustrations were also visible.

The colours were also liked and there was no suggestions for any changes.

The text was too long and in some instances contained technical terms that were not understood, examples of these terms are water audit, dual flush toilets, and water dams.

While reading the text most of the participants lost interest and became restless. Even when they followed what was being read out to them, the level of retention of the information at the end of the group was very low. Recall of the messages was inconsistent and showed that the main messages were not clear in their minds.

There should be consistency in the use of the words like translation of plumber and toilet tanks.

Recommendations:

1. It is imperative to demonstrate to citizens a quantified figure of how much they can save on their water bill. This is concrete evidence to consumers on how to save money. It is a customer benefit that speaks directly to their wallets.

Moreover, it is necessary to avoid gaps in estimates such as saying 30% at one point and 50% at another. This undermines credibility and creates confusion.

It is even a good idea to provide Dinar figures based on, say, five examples of typical average bills (depending on household size) and show what the estimated saving is.

2. There is a language problem with WSD and brochure and flipchart. Too much technical language is a psychological barrier to encouraging and attitude/behavior change.

It is necessary to simplify the language and even use alternative terms for devices and parts. Technological terms are fine on the supply side of technicians and engineers; consumers requires daily language. Work needs to be done to simplify language. This will improve the message recall, which is currently rather weak.

Furthermore, with language, phrase the way consumers think: for example, "if faucets last 4 years or longer, they waste water". This may be a technical fact, but consumers tend to think more in terms of 5 years. Use that instead to be more persuasive.

Along with language, illustrations in the brochure and flipchart must be realistic and clear.

Specifically, for the flipchart, it is too wordy which reduces recall of main messages. Preferably, no more than 25 words per page.

3. Distribution will be a key issue. Brochures and flipcharts are only part of the communication process. Point of sales not only provides a place to buy WSDs but also serves as a communication medium. Use this with care and creativity. For example, to sell WSDs in construction/sanitary equipment outlets is fine but limited. People go to such places only when renovating or making large repairs. Use outlets where people go frequently such as commercial centers; supermarkets, and petrol stations. The latter are especially good if linked to water-saving car wash methods.